

THE BULLETIN

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Volume 2 - No. 42

Greensburg, Indiana

November 22, 1969

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Mrs. Hunter Robbins
Charles Seitz-Colorado 616

* * * *

COMMITTEES

Arrangements

Forrest McCardle

Audit

Mrs. Dwight Williams
Raymond Carr

Calling

Miss Gladys Aldrich
Mrs. Roy Beeson
Mrs. Frank Clark
Mrs. Paul H. Huber
Mrs. George Greer
Mrs. Frank Marlin
Mrs. Forrest McCardle
Mrs. Raymond Moeller
Mrs. Charles Osburn
Mrs. Pansy Reed
Mrs. Mabel Samuels
Mrs. Delton Shazer
Miss Victoria Woolverton

Decorations

Mrs. Forrest McCardle
Charles A. Walls

Display

Charles Osburn

Nominations

Paul H. Huber
Frank Marlin
William Parker

Program

William H. Hunter
Mrs. Dan Baldwin

OCCASION: Eleventh Annual Dinner
Meeting and Election
of Officers.

SPEAKER: Mr. Robert D. Garton

DATE: Saturday night, December
6th., 1969 at 6:00 P.M.,
Greensburg Time.

PLACE: Presbyterian Church
N.E. corner Public Square,
Greensburg, Indiana.
Entrance on Washington
Street.

Mr. Garton is President of Robert
Garton Associates, a management
consulting firm in Columbus, Ind.
A gifted speaker of national acclaim,
perhaps the greatest honor bestowed
on him to date, is that he is current-
ly listed in the 1969 editions of
"Outstanding Young Men in America".
Mr. Garton's subject will be -
"AN INFLUENCE CALLED INDIANA".
A native of Iowa, Indiana is proud
to claim him, as the membership will
attest after hearing him.

* * * *

RESERVATIONS

If you have not already been con-
tacted, please call Mrs. Forrest
McCardle (662-5432) by Tuesday,
December 2nd. if you plan to attend
the dinner. Tickets are \$2.00 each,
payable at the door.

EVERYBODY IS WELCOME!

YOUR COUNTY

DECATUR COUNTY, organized in 1821, was named after the gallant Commodore Stephen Decatur. It is bounded north by Rush, east by Franklin and Ripley, south by Jennings, and west by Bartholomew and Shelby, and it contains 400 square miles. It is divided into nine townships, Washington, Fugit, Clinton, Adams, Clay, Jackson, Sand Creek, Marion and Salt Creek. The population in 1830 was 5,854, in 1840 15,553, and at this time about 19,000.

There are no barrens or prairie lands in the county; the face of the country is mostly level, with gentle undulations, though on some of the streams it is hilly; the bottoms are rich, though small; the soil of the upland is generally a rich, black loam, and the timber consists principally of ash, poplar, walnut, sugar tree, oak and beech. Along the east and south line of the county there is some flat, wet land, good for grass, but not adapted to grain. The manufacturing establishments and mechanical trades of the county are merely sufficient for home consumption. The staple productions for export are hogs, cattle, horses, mules and wheat, and they are estimated to amount to \$150,000 annually. There are in the county thirty-eight stores and groceries, twenty grist mills, twenty saw mills, one woolen factory, of which all but six are propelled by water, twelve lawyers, twenty-three physicians and twenty ministers of the gospel. The County Seminary, at Greensburgh, is in a prosperous condition with about seventy-five pupils, and the common school system is in moderately successful operation throughout the county. The following is the number of churches of the various denominations: four Old School, two New School and one Associate Reformed Presbyterian, ten Baptist, ten Methodist, four Christian and one Catholic. The county of Decatur and its inhabitants, without making any special parade as to literature, morals, or enterprise, may be said to be self-sharpeners, steadily progressing in a variety of ways, and not inferior in respectability to any part of the State.

The taxable land in the county amounts to 224,847 acres, and only between 500 and 1,000 acres still belong to the United States.

MEMORIES OF MILLHOUSEN

At the turn of the century Millhousen was a booming little town as compared to now. There were 4 general stores, a harness shop where my uncle made complete sets of harness, a tannery, saw mill, flour mill, shingle factory and 4 saloons - being a German settlement most everybody drank beer. Herbert & Rohrs owned the saw mill, the flour mill, the tannery and the shingle mill. Grandfather Herbert cut the shingles - they were poplar shingles and I bunched them as they came from the machine. Another of my chores was to pump the tan bark brine from one tank to another at the tannery. There were also 2 blacksmiths. My grandfather Johann Scheidler was a blacksmith and wagon-maker - who taught his son George the trade. They made wagons from scratch and also turned out hubs for buggies, surreys and light spring wagons... I often think of Millhousen as being one big family, where everybody helped each other when extra help was needed. Nearly every family butchered their own pork and how I loved butchering day! Again it was a boys chore to help stuff the sausage and cut the lard. Too, we would go to the woods and gather hickory bark to smoke the meat.... Back in those days there was no electricity - all that one could see was a dim coal oil light burning in the house, or someone carrying a lantern to the barn.... Dr. Glass owned the first automobile - a Brush I am sure. My, what an event it was when Dr. Glass wheezed into town!.... My sister Mrs. Edward Luken still lives in the old home place. I left Millhousen in the spring of 1913. I was 19 years old when I went to Illinois to work. Except for returning in 1922 to be married, the next 43 years were spent in Illinois as a mail-carrier. I came back to Greensburg in 1956.... I often think what a wonderful and peaceful world this would be if everyone could live like the people of Millhousen lived back in those days. My early teenage days were happy ones and I thank God that I was born there.

Clem Scheidler

THE DISPLAY - A traditional part of the Dinner Meeting, members are asked to bring their old pictures. These can be old street scenes, early automobiles, trains and stations, school groups, floods, street fairs, early farm scenes and the like. Some one has said that a picture is worth a thousand words. All members are urged to bring an old picture.

SOMETHING OF VALUE - A Cincinnati book store offers Father Riebenthaler's A CENTURY OF CATHOLICITY IN MILLHOUSEN, INDIANA for sale at \$6.00. Published in 1934, this little volume of 63 pages is a worthwhile addition to our growing library. We are pleased to have a copy, thanks to Father Riebenthaler.

CRUM-CRUME FAMILY - Mrs. Amanda Sefton might write Mrs. Everett Huntzinger, RFD 1, Box 57, Pendleton, Indiana 46064 for information on the Crum-Crume family.

THE LAST MEETING

Some 35 members and guests journeyed to Jennings county, Sunday, October 12th. for the fall field trip. They were greeted at the court house in Vernon by Mr. Homer Dell, the local historian and a member of the Jennings County Historical Society. The speaker related that the court house, the third of its kind, was built in 1859. Materials were locally burnt brick, locally quarried sand stone with an imported roof of 40 lb. tern (English tin) which is still on the building. The Old Tavern, an inn and stage coach stop, built in 1838 still stands at the Northwest corner of the public square. It is now occupied as an antique shop, museum and art center. The Old Tunnel Mill off limits due to the recent rains, was built prior to 1839 as a depot for the original Madison & Indpls. Ry. There are a number of "firsts" in this section of Jennings county. Among them-the first railroad and the first railroad overpass - there in Vernon to be seen - a brick lined structure still sturdy after these 132 years. Vernon had the first all women jury as well as the first public playground in Indiana. John Vawter was the first settler in Vernon, this about 1815. The trek continued to historic Paris 14 miles distant from Vernon. John Hunt Morgan's raiders passed through Paris in 1863. Settled about 1800, a plank road was later built to Madison 19 miles away. Paris was originally located in Jefferson county but due to a shift in county lines as was so often the case, it is now located in Jennings county. Paris Crossing some few miles away came into being when the B. & O. Ry. was built from North Vernon to Jeffersonville. The day's festivities ended at Muscatatuck Park with delicious refreshments of tea rings and apple cider.

Members can still qualify as EARLY BIRDS by paying their
 1970 dues at the dinner meeting. There has been no increase
 in prices - one dollar as usual!

Mrs. Roy
 Mrs. Fran
 Mrs. Paul
 Mrs. Geor
 Mrs. Frai
 Mrs. For
 Mrs. Ray
 Mrs. Cha

*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	WITH ALL BEST WISHES						*
*	FOR						*
*	THE HOLIDAYS						*
*	AND						*
*	THE NEW YEAR!						*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

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THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Volume 2 - No. 41

Greensburg, Indiana

October 4, 1969

NEW MEMBERS - WELCOME!

Dr. Roy H. Benke - Indpls.
Mrs. Roy H. Benke - Indpls.
Mrs. Ruth Nyce Burton - North
Manchester, Indiana
Edward S. McKee - Rochester, N.Y.
John L. McKee - Summit, N.J.
Jack Lines - Yakima, Wash.
Mrs. Frank Gavin - San Diego,
Calif.
Mrs. Cecil W. Mann - Sylva,
N.C.
Mrs. Amanda Sefton - Manchester,
Mo. 614

OCCASION: Fall Tour

DATE: Sunday afternoon, Oct 12,
1969

PLACE: Jennings County Courthouse
Vernon, Indiana at 2 P.M.

PROGRAM: Historic Vernon -
Tunnel Mill -
Grave of Wilbur Shaw -
Battle of Finney's Ford -
North American House -
J.M. & I. Ry. -
B & C Depot -
Antique Shops - Museum

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THE SOCIETY'S OFFICERS 1969

President.....W. F. McCardle
1st V.P.....Mrs. Dan Baldwin
2nd V.P.....Charles Osburn
Corr. Secy.....Mrs. Van Batterton
525 N. Broadway
Greensburg, Ind.
Rec. Secy...Mrs. Dorothy D. Doles
303 E. Central Ave.
Greensburg, Ind.
Treasurer.....Miss Alpha Thackery

Mr. Homer Dell, historian
and member of Jennings Co.
Historical Society will
speak.

Refreshments!!!

BRING YOUR WALKING SHOES

SEE MAP ATTACHED.

EVERYBODY IS WELCOME!!

* * * *

It was George Cary Eggleston who told about the man from the East
who asked about routes to various points in and beyond Indiana:

"If I want to go to Indianapolis, what road do I take?"
he asked.

"Why, you go to Napoleon, and take the road northwest."

"If I want to go to Madison?"

"Go to Napoleon, and take the road wouthwest."

"Suppose I want to go to St. Louis?"

"Why, you go to Napoleon, and take the ... road west."

....At last the man asked in despair:

"Well now, stranger, suppose I wanted to go to H...?"

The (Hoosier) answered without a moment's hesita-
tion, "Oh, in that case, just go to Napoleon, and stay
there."

George C. Eggleston-RECOLLECTIONS OF A VARIED LIFE

TERRIBLE SWIFT SWORD by Bruce Catton, page 411

"(Confederate General) Bragg also was driving north, and Buell's men marched hard in a vain effort to overtake him. Bragg came up thirty miles east of Bowling Green, which had marked the center of Albert Sidney Johnston's line just a year earlier, and at Munfordville, where the railroad to Louisville crossed the Green River, he struck a Federal strong point held by 4000 men under Colonel John T. Wilder, who until recently had been an unassuming Indiana business man and who now was about to add a strange little footnote to the story of the Civil War.

"Bragg's advance guard attacked the fortifications twice and was repulsed with moderate loss. Then Bragg brought up the rest of his army and sent in a demand for surrender, pointing out that the Federals were surrounded and that their case was hopeless. Through the Confederate lines that night came a flag of truce and a Yankee officer--Colonel Wilder in person, seeking a conference with Major General Buckner, who led a division in Hardee's corps. In Buckner's tent Wilder became disarmingly frank. He was not, he said, a military man at all, but he did want to do the right thing. He had heard that Buckner was not only a professional soldier but an honest gentleman as well; and would Buckner now please tell him if, under the rules of the game, it was Colonel Wilder's duty to surrender or to fight it out?

"Somewhat flabbergasted--he said later that he 'would not have deceived that man under those circumstances for anything'--Buckner said Wilder would have to make his own decision. (He knew what a weight that was. Seven months earlier he had had to surrender Fort Donelson, his superiors having fled from responsibility, and when he sent a flag through the Yankee lines his old friend Grant had been merciless.) Buckner pointed out that Wilder's men were hemmed in by six times their own numbers and that Bragg had enough artillery in line to destroy the fort in short order; at the same time, if the sacrifice of every man would aid the Federal cause elsewhere it was Wilder's duty to fight. . . . In the end, Buckner took him to see Bragg, who was curt with him but let him count the cannon in the Confederate works. Wilder counted enough to convince him that the jig was up, and at last he surrendered: a well-meaning but bewildered citizen-soldier who had gone to his enemy for professional advice and, all things considered, had been fairly dealt with."

C.R.E.

Chapel Hill, N.C.

eds note- John T. Wilder was a colorful individual, a leader in this community and a successful civilian soldier. The incident described above as "a strange little footnote" bears out the expression that the Civil War was the first modern one and the last romantic one. To both of these John Wilder subscribed. His introduction of the repeating Spencer rifle at Hoover's Gap, so devastating to the Confederate forces, along with his equipping his Hatcher Brigade with that simple tool--are indicative of a modern war. Criticised for erecting his own monument at Chicamauga and on another occasion for stealing horses - but it was war-- nevertheless he was a leader and the whole story hasn't been told - particularly his as an "ironmonger" before and after the war. He is buried at the foot of Lookout Mountain.

Further in this connection, members of the Indianapolis Civil War Roundtable and friends here in Greensburg have contributed money for the erection of a tablet honoring the general. The site has not yet been determined. Here is an excellent opportunity for the Historical Society to participate in commemorating the name of one of Greensburg's illustrious soldiers.

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THIS AND THAT

Mrs. Amanda Sefton writes that she was delightfully surprised to find a reference and request for information on the Crum-Crume family of Decatur County as this is one of the families she is tracing....The Society is especially pleased to welcome and add the new members to the roster - scattered as they are. The toponymy of Decatur County has to do with its physical and cultural features, in other words its place names. For example -

Tub Creek is a small stream that rises North of and flows through New Point. It is a branch of Laughery Creek. There is a legend, that if you have ever waded in Tub Creek, you may leave but sometime you will return - perhaps not for long but you will return.

Other place names to mention a few, and there are hundreds of them, are - Biddingers Crossing, Richmond, Tarkeo, Drydens Park, Oklahoma, Painter Creek Hill, Wintersville, Harper, Madison Road, Pompeys Pillar, Tarvia Road, Concord, etc. The subject of place names is a fascinating one and is closely related to genealogy. Every crossroad or hamlet, every stream or swamp has a story - its name and origin, location, post office or not, any event that occurred there, its legends and so on. This editor wishes that members come forth with place names and the related story familiar to them. This could be a lasting contribution to the lore of Decatur County and a source of information.

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MEMBERSHIP - Open to everyone having an interest in history and his heritage. The annual dues are \$1.00 each, payable in advance. The fiscal year ends Dec. 31. Please direct all applications and renewals to the Recording Secretary.

EARLY BIRDS - It is time again for the EARLY BIRDS. The President suggests that you pay your 1970 membership fee at the fall meeting, in order that the Recording Secretary can hand you your new membership card at the dinner meeting. Object - to save postage!!!

* * * *

NAPOLÉON - It is an old story that to go any place, you had to start from Napoleon but until now we could not document it. It appears that George was a bit naive in his description of early Hoosier life, much like his brother Edward.

She was an Oldster when I was a Youngster - this is her story, told by both of us.

Mrs. Rebecca Von Cleve Pulse, mother of William Pulse, founder of the Pulse Lumber Company, lived in a great old family style house that stood between number 225 and 235 West North Street on the half block east of Monfort.

Mrs. Pulse described her place as "the old Mills Henry home," - it was the family place of the Henry family. The house itself was old and spacious of Civil War period. It was built in southern style, the structure comprising a full two story center section fronted with a long deep porch with tall round pillars reaching past the second story. Long wings, of one story, extended to the right and to the left of the two story center portion.

Each wing had six rooms, two of which formed an ell at the outside end of the wing partially embracing a back yard "work space" garden. The center section first floor was divided into two big rooms, one in front, one in the rear, each had a huge fireplace in the center dividing wall.

For a time I lived with Mrs. Pulse under her care from Monday till Friday while attending High School. On winter evenings it was a privilege listening to interesting stories about the Pulse family - its pioneer days in Ripley County before moving to Saltcreek Township in Decatur County where, she said, they built a big stone house north of New Point and lived there for some time before coming to Greensburg.

Mrs. Pulse was interested in American heritage and in young people especially those under her charge. One evening, anxious to hear how my history lessons were progressing, she put a question. My answer was typically childish. "Oh yes - I'm reading about something away far off way back - about when Lafayette came to this country in 1824."

Now, in my young inexperienced mind at the time, both Lafayette and 1824 were about as far off as 1492 or the ark. So, I hope to be excused for having a shade of doubt at the time of her story, although I did listen and happily I remembered.

Said she, "General Lafayette visited in my father's home when he stopped at Fort Washington, now Cincinnati. At the time of his visit in 1824-25, my father John Von Cleve owned the land where the town of Cleves now stands and is at present part of Cincinnati.

"When the General came, he bowed from the waist with delightful manner and asked about each and every member of the family. He was answered with courtesy, of course, but with not as much formality. "And how is the Madame Von Cleve", the General said with another deep bow. My father answered and declared that the Madame "was very well indeed and that a baby son had arrived and that he, the general had come just in time to name the new baby boy, already six months old but who had not been given a name.

The general was delighted and with another deep bow took the infant into his arms, and with quite some solemnity spoke:-

"Youngest man of the Von Cleve family and son of my esteemed friend John Von Cleve, I bestow upon you my full name - Marie Jean Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Du Motier, Marquis De Lafayette." And at this point the General "bows" out of the story. The little boy who was held by Lafayette and named by him grew to manhood and lived to a ripe old age, but he never used his long name - he was always known as Lafe Von Cleve. For a time he resided in Greensburg.

His sister, Rebecca Von Cleve Pulse was born December 3, 1823 in Ohio. The parents were John Von Cleve and wife Jane Clar (K)? Mrs. Pulse died June 20, 1913 in her home on West North Street - aged 89 years, 6 months and 17 days.

Soo - this relater of tales, as told by Rebecca Von Cleve Pulse, has touched the hand that touched the hand of Lafayette.

Remind me sometime, I do want to shake your hand.

Jennie Starks McKee

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THE LAST MEETING

Many members had the opportunity of riding a freight train for the first time. We are speaking of the train ride sponsored by the RAILWAY MUSEUM at Westport. A freight train as we know one, consists of a locomotive, fifty to a hundred box-cars and a caboose. This train consisted of a locomotive (dinkey) and a caboose....John Hickman was the engineer and Joe E. Brown doubled as the conductor and narrator for the trip. Barbara Walenga (girl friend) was the station agent and sold tickets. Other crew members were Raymond Tower, fireman, and Robert Smith was the rear flagman. Indiana law requires a rear flagman....Excursion rates for the round trip were in effect all day for members of the Society... One of the girl passengers, it was observed, seeking a vantage point, climbed to the cupola (railroad term). Her ascent was easy - her descent was another matter, but with help she made it!...Owing to the condition of the track, slow orders were in effect most of the way, but then nobody was in a hurry anyway....Mileposts 237 and 238 were observed - miles to where nobody knows. But it is known, that Westport in its day was the Eastern terminal of this, the longest railroad in the United States - the C.M.St.P.& Pacific Ry....The delay at Harper Valley was one of necessity - the engineer had to pump up his air for the return trip - No! girls, the engine doesn't run on air - the air was for the air brakes, if you please....There being no way, Engineer Hickman threw the throttle into reverse and backed merrily all of the way to Westport. It was a delightful trip for one (me), who has for all of his life, been exposed to the railroad one way or another. Enroute home the group stopped at OLD STONEY as guests of the William Parkers and were served iced tea and cookies to round out the social hour. Here the warm hospitality of the Parkers in their beautiful setting made for a fine climax to another good meeting. President McCardle presided over a short business session.

MAP OF TOUR AREA

